

# Shipley



## Parish Design Statement

Supplementary Planning Document



Horsham  
District  
Council

May 2013

Dear checker-work of woods the Sussex Weald  
If a name thrills me yet of things on earth  
That name is thine. How often have I fled  
To thy deep hedgerows and embraced each field  
Each lag each pasture, fields which gave me birth  
And saw my youth and which must hold me dead.

Epitaph on the tomb of Wilfrid Scawen Blunt (1840-1922) poet, writer and diplomat,  
who lived at New Buildings Place, and is buried in the yew avenue there.



I will gather and carefully make my friends  
Of the men of the Sussex Weald;  
They watch the stars from silent folds,  
They stiffly plough the field.  
By them and the God of the South Country  
My poor soul shall be healed.

From 'The South Country' by Hilaire Belloc (1870-1953) poet and MP  
who lived at King's Land in Shingley village.



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*Front Cover photograph thanks to Jim Woodward Nutt*

# 1. Purpose of the Parish Design Statement

The mainspring of this Parish Design Statement (PDS) process is the recognition by government that the local community should have the opportunity to shape and positively influence their environment through design. A different design, which one person thinks fits well, may be an eyesore to another.

We, the parishioners of Shipley wholeheartedly endorse the philosophy of local involvement in shaping our community through high quality and locally appropriate design. We wish to ensure that it is applied in our area. Practical experience in the parish shows the detrimental effect of misplaced designs

The Horsham District Council (HDC), through its planning department, provides guidance for planning in the district of which we are a part. The point of having a review at parish in addition to district level is that styles may vary on quite a small scale. HDC can look at the whole district, but the local community is well placed to advise on the subtle differences between areas. This concept is particularly important in Shipley. Ours is a rural Low Wealden area. The prevailing styles in a town such as Horsham, may not be found in a rural situation such as ours. Traditional building materials used in areas nearer the South Downs such as Ashington, or along the sandstone ridge that passes through West Chiltington and Amberley may not be found here.

We, as residents of the Parish, have a unique appreciation and understanding of its character and intimately know the details of our local area.

The aim of this document is to recognise and describe the character of the local scene, and to influence all the various interested parties to maintain and sustain it. We set out clear guidance

for the design of all development in the Parish, based on its distinctive character. It is an official planning document and gives planning advice directly applicable to the statutory planning system. HDC and other planning bodies are required to take notice of it. Unlike other similar documents, it is entirely community based with input only from parish residents. It must be stressed that this advice does not represent the personal likes and dislikes of the contributors. It is a recognition and description of what is already here; either characteristic, which we applaud, or uncharacteristic, which we deprecate, and the expressed opinions of parishioners.

This Statement describes the qualities that we value in our parish and its surroundings, but it is not meant to detail what type of development should take place or the state of local services. These are matters reserved to HDC and other bodies. Here we are only concerned with the visual character of what is created or maintained and how that should protect and enhance the look of our area.

Design Statements were first conceived by Natural England (formerly The Countryside Agency) to enable a local community to have a say over what new development should look like within their area. Design Statements were formally adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance under the 1990 Planning Act. However, since the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and the advent of Local Development Frameworks, Design Statements can now be adopted as Supplementary Planning Documents and have more statutory weight in the planning system.

The Shipley Parish Design Statement having been adopted by Horsham District Council as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) sits



*St Cuthman's*



Shingley Village

within the Council's Local Development Framework as another Local Development Document. An SPD has statutory status but is only used to supplement Development Plan Documents (DPD) such as the Core Strategy and Development Control Policies, providing further detail on policies and proposals that the DPDs do not have the scope for. As it is a statutory document it is subject to the Planning Regulations which require, amongst other things, rigorous public consultation and was formally agreed by Council Members before it was adopted.

The Design Statement should be used to guide developers, planners and architects on the unique design qualities of the parish when submitting planning applications for new development or extensions to existing buildings. It will help District and Parish Councillors in judging these. However, the document is equally relevant to property owners in the parish who are looking to alter their properties under the Permitted Development Rights, but would like some guidance on the most sympathetic design of these alterations to help maintain the special character of the parish.

The Parish Plan drawn up by the Parish Council in 2005, which looked at policies to be adopted by the parish, stated that the parishioners' wish was 'to maintain the rural nature of the Parish'. Therefore another aim of this Design Statement will be to uphold that wish and sensitise ourselves and fellow parishioners to what we see and what we value, so that we can preserve and potentially improve the look of our surroundings. This covers not only the planning matters mentioned above, but also those aspects of visual appearance such as hedges, walls, verges, fields and woods which do not require planning consent, but which greatly determine the look of the Parish. We can act upon such matters as individuals but they affect others.

There is a subsidiary reason in that HDC, WSCC, telephone and electricity companies and the like, can construct pavements, drains, signs, poles, cables and telephone masts without detailed planning consent. These also affect the visual appearance of the parish, and we seek to influence

them. WSCC are also responsible for maintenance of roads, verges and public footpaths, and we wish to influence them in their policies and actions.

WSCC has drawn up a set of guidelines covering the various Landscape Character Areas in the county. The north of our parish comes in the Central Low Weald Area, the south comes in the Southern Low Weald Area, with a strip of the Upper Adur Valley crossing the middle. This is a full document with a description of the rural character of the areas, and management guidelines on how to maintain this. The document is available on the WSCC website ([www.westsussex.gov.uk](http://www.westsussex.gov.uk)). The feedback that we have received from parishioners indicates that they agree with what is written; which is very similar in all three areas. Basically the requirement is to conserve the predominantly wooded and pastoral character, maintain the tranquillity and enhance the wildlife. Where appropriate, elements of this advice are included in this statement.

HDC has drawn up a Landscape Character Assessment of the Horsham area, giving more detail than the WSCC document. The north of the parish is included in the Southwater and Shingley Wooded Farmlands section, the south in the Broadford Bridge to Ashington Farmlands, and the middle in the Upper Adur Valley. The document is available on the HDC website ([www.horsham.gov.uk](http://www.horsham.gov.uk)). Again appropriate elements are covered in this statement.

It is clearly necessary for this document to represent a broad spectrum of opinion in the parish. Our Steering Committee was set up under the auspices of the Parish Council with a number of Council members, but with some members with other skills or experience. The process was widely advertised in published material and with posters. A well-attended initial public meeting was held in October 2008. The draft of this document was advertised, sent out to all those who expressed an interest and displayed on the Parish Council website ([www.shingleypc.wordpress.com](http://www.shingleypc.wordpress.com)) for a 6 week consultation period, which included a second public meeting in March 2011. A record of this process is available in the Consultation Statement lodged with

## 2. Shingley Parish:

# Historical, Geographical and Social Context



*Knepp Castle ruin*

HDC.

This section of the Parish Design Statement is intended to show how the parish is distinctive, and thus how this distinctive character should be maintained. The character is formed from the history, geography and inhabitants of the parish, which of course are themselves linked.

### Position and character

Shingley Parish occupies a position in the Low Weald of West Sussex, roughly halfway between the North and South Downs. It is large, covering 3,115 hectares, and is roughly diamond shaped on a north-south axis with Shingley village at its centre.

It is unusual in this part of England in that it is almost entirely rural, with a population of about 1,300 living in a few settlements and isolated farmhouses. A feeling for the development of the parish can be gained from the statistic that in 1841 the population was recorded as 1,200.

There are only two small villages, Shingley and Coolham, and two hamlets, Dragons Green and Brooks Green which are just dispersed agglomerations of houses and farms. Apart from the centre of Shingley village, none of these is 'chocolate box' attractive, but all have a rural charm which

is well worth protecting. Brooks Green includes a mobile home park and caravan site, and there is a small strip settlement along Countryman Lane.

The parish is tightly bordered on its north-east side by Southwater, a very large and rapidly growing village.

### General History

After the last Ice Age, this area of The Weald was very largely forest.

The remains of a pre-historic humanoids' camp have been found at Boxgrove near Chichester, and Neanderthal flint tools have been found near Pulborough, just to the south of the parish.

There was considerable bronze-age settlement on the Downs to the south from very early times, and there may have been some settlement in the forest as early as 1500 BC, and by activities servicing Stane Street and other nearby roads during the Roman occupation. However, settlement only really commenced with the Saxons in the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> centuries AD when the established manors on and near the South Downs started to clear the forest to harvest timber and gain extra pasture for seasonal use. These areas were known

as "outliers" and were counted as part of the main manor. For this reason, a number of areas of the parish were dependent on different manors and not part of a single large estate.

Outliers in the north of the parish round Brooks Green were part of the manor of Muntham in present day Findon which was held by Oswald from King Edward.

Areas in the east of the parish round Shingley may have been part of the manor of Washington, held by Edwin from Earl Godwin, or the manor of Thakeham held by Bricisi from King Edward. It may be that other areas were part of the manors of Goring, Steyning, Wiston, and Coombes

After 1066 the Rape of Bramber, consisting of 41 manors, was created and given by the Conqueror to William de Braose, who fought with him at Hastings. De Braose in turn gave the three manors of Muntham, Washington and Thakeham to Morin. The eastern area of the parish comprising the manors of Knepp and Shingley was held directly by de Braose, though he subsequently gave the saxon church at Shingley, of which nothing is now known, to his collegiate church at Bramber. This eventually came to Philip de Harcourt who gave it to the



Shipley Church

Knights Templar in around 1139. They built the present church in around 1140, but after the suppression of the Templars in 1315 it passed to the Hospitallers of St John. They in turn were dissolved by Henry VIII, when the church returned to the Church authorities.

Shipley parish was in the hundred of West Grenestede and though none of its manors were included in the Domesday book separately, Shipley was included as Sepelei, related to the manor of Fulking. The relationship is described ambiguously. De Braose built Knepp Castle on the bank of the river Adur, which was a tidal estuary at that time. Only a small part of that building now remains.

Timber was cut and used for royal purposes in the 12<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries. Later there was significant ironfounding of the abundant ironstone found locally, and of which there is a large lump in the south porch of the church. A furnace was said to have been worked in the later 16<sup>th</sup> century at a site to the south-east of the dam at Knepp Lake. Another hammer pond in the parish south of Shipley village and west of Hammer

Farm drove both a furnace and a forge, at least one of which was working in 1641.

The only other industry was small scale brickmaking at a site to the east of Coolham.

Since then, the parish has been very largely agricultural. There have been a number of water mills and windmills. The spectacular windmill built in Shipley village in 1878 is the only one which remains.

In the Second World War, during the build-up to D-Day, many thousands of Canadian soldiers were camped in the wooded areas of the parish; the HQ being at the new Knepp Castle. At the same time, an airstrip was constructed south of Coolham to support the Normandy landings. It had two runways, north/south and east/west and was mainly used by Polish air squadrons. 1,000 trees were cut down to accommodate this. There is a memorial stone in Coolham to those who died, and a memorial plaque and oak trees planted on the bridleway.

### The social scene

Historically Shipley has been a rural parish with most of



Airfield Memorial Service



Coolham cottage



History Society

the inhabitants working in the agriculture industry. Housing largely consisted of larger houses for farmers and land owners and smaller cottages for farm workers.

Since the end of the Second World War this has all changed. Agriculture has declined and this, coupled with mechanisation, has meant that many fewer people are needed to work the land. The number of inhabitants of Shipley who rely on agriculture for a living is now very small.

This decline in agriculture has led to many new people from



*Stoolball, Coolham*

different backgrounds moving into the Parish. This, coupled with increased personal mobility brought about by car ownership, has caused a huge change in the make-up of the Shibley population. The Parish population is now much more diverse and reflects the trend over the past years for people to move from towns and cities to live in the countryside. Nowadays, most of the Shibley population does not work in the Parish, but commutes to nearby towns or even London. There are also a considerable number of retired people living here.

This influx of new people has led to changes in the style of living in the Parish. Smaller houses have been extended and larger new houses built. The character of the landscape has begun to change with the introduction of a more suburban feel in houses and their settings. This Design Statement seeks to identify those features of the landscape which give the Parish its distinctive rural character. If we take these into account, then we can preserve this character for the benefit of us all.

## Geology and Agriculture

The ground of the parish is gently undulating in the north with a high point in the far north corner of 60m, and flatter in the south with a general level of 15m. The wooded nature means that there are not many long views. The South Downs can be seen splendidly from a number of points; though often marred by the high voltage power line.

The soil of the north part of the parish is predominantly heavy clay on which oak and hazel trees and grass flourish, but which is hard to work and drains poorly, so is not well suited to ploughing and arable cropping. The main occupation has been the keeping of animals, mostly cattle, for milk and meat.

Consequently the farms are small. The fields are small and covered in natural meadow, the hedges plentiful and the dwellings spread out uniformly. Historically they were fully exploited and closely managed to maximise productivity.

In the flatter southern part of the parish some hedges have been removed to create larger

fields in which arable crops such as barley and wheat have been grown.

In the west of the parish, speculative break-up of larger estates has led to a proliferation of small-holdings. These are too small to be farmed economically, and some have recreational horses in residence. Mercifully we are free of the normally consequential small paddocks and poor state of the ground. Many small fields are untended or used only for haymaking.

There are also the remains of earlier attempts at more-intensive agriculture such as pig or chicken farming. Some large-scale egg production continues.

There is no doubt that the appearance of the open countryside has changed and is changing, dramatically. Farmers have been considered the custodians of the countryside but this has happened when reasonable business success has been possible. For many years there has been a clear message to farmers when various forms of production subsidy for specific enterprises have



*Traditional meadow*

been available, or generally unsupported enterprises such as dairy farming were profitable. Profitable systems usually meant a high level of inputs were required with a need to ensure crops – grass or cereals – had little competition from pests. The countryside therefore looked well manicured and clearly significant management was being carried out.

Major change came about as dairy herds were sold due to lack of profitability, cereal prices crashed and production was no longer supported on a direct basis. Many Wealden cereal farmers have by nature of soil quality often struggled to produce high yields and many have ceased production to look for other areas for business survival. They have therefore looked at diversification and other schemes to provide money for less intensive activities.

It is not clear where agriculture is going as recent increases in grain and meat prices have been offset by significant increases in fuel, fertiliser and other prices. It is possible, however, that the trend will be away from food production as a main aim towards environmental care, and

maybe use of woodlands for fuel production.

The open countryside of the Parish reflects these changes, particularly as one very large estate has chosen to cease traditional farming. By contrast, there are fields now used for polo playing with large areas of tightly-mown grass. There are fields in transition to parkland with tree protectors interspersed with grand mature oaks. Arable crop production and cattle farming are diminished but not totally finished. On the plus side, there are more sheep in the parish now, and they keep their pasture well.

There are also a considerable number of horses, though they are all recreational rather than the working horses of previous generations.

### Building

Interspersed with the clay are layers of very hard Horsham stone. This is sandstone, and cleaves into thin sheets and was widely used for flagstones and roofing tiles. It has been worked in a number of locations in the parish. There is no immediately local source of stone suitable for wall building except for a small



*Haymaking*

outcrop near Newbuildings Place.

The early building materials were therefore wood and clay; consequently no really early buildings survive, except the stone-built church and ruined remains of the original Knepp castle. In the 15<sup>th</sup> century, there was enough wealth for substantial timber-framed houses to be built. Being on clay, the roads were very poor and transport difficult, so these houses were built from the materials readily available. That meant open hall houses with oak frames, with an infill of oak and hazel wattle and clay and straw daub. Roofing was with Horsham stone slates.

As wealth increased, solars and upper floors were installed in the houses. These houses may have been small with only two bays, or larger with three or more. Also glass, which had previously been too expensive,



*Crookhorn Farmhouse*



1809 Knepp Castle

was fitted into windows which had previously been mullioned and closed with wooden shutters.

Various layers of wooden weather board, clay tiles or solid brick walls were added to the outside of existing timber frame buildings to protect the infill, which was prone to deterioration due to rain and summer dryness. It is quite incredible that such a large proportion of these houses still exist in the parish.

There is a fine display of these early houses at Singleton open-air museum.

Brickmaking developed locally in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, and thereafter new houses were constructed of bricks and mortar, with clay roof tiles. Older houses, which did not have chimneys and were therefore smoky and unpleasant to live in, had stone and brick chimneys inserted. These were inserted in various different places depending on the shape of the house.

The pattern of occupation was to have a farmhouse with outbuildings nearby. Because of the mild nature of the climate here, the farm buildings were not part of or even attached to the farm-house. There were small houses for farm workers which may have been part of the farm steading, or spread out amongst the fields so that livestock could

be tended, but they were very poorly built single floor buildings and very few remain. At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a number of good solid brick semi-detached houses were built for farm workers. These are largely of a one-and-a-half storey style, with the upper floor half built into the roof. Many are still occupied and are handsome houses.

In the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century a number of bungalows were built. Some of these have had upper floors inserted into the roof-space, with dormer windows added. More recently 'chalet bungalows' have been built with the upper floor in the roof-space from the outset.

With the coming of the railways, Welsh slate became available, and some houses were roofed with these. This is not truly traditional, but has become so by usage.

Over the years a number of houses have been extended so that they have become much larger, but there are no really large houses in the parish except maybe the new Knepp Castle. This was designed by John Nash and built in 1809 in a mock medieval style with turrets and battlements.

There was a 'Palace' reputedly built in the south of the parish, which was demolished and moved to London to build the house of



Farm cottage

the Duke of Wellington at Hyde Park Gate, but no remains can be found at the reputed site.

There are a few handsome residences such as Newbuildings Place, the former home of Wilfrid Scawen Blunt, poet and explorer of Arabia. Also Saucelands and a large number of half-timbered farmhouses and cottages such as King's Land, former home of Hilaire Belloc, MP, poet and writer.

There was some building and re-building in the Victorian period and later, such as Shipley Old Vicarage. Although there is some variation in house styles, there is considerable harmony amongst the houses in the parish.

Luckily we have been largely spared the almost universal British blight in the 20<sup>th</sup> century to build houses as part of groups or estates having almost identical design, unsympathetic to the local character, and intensively developed inside particular field boundaries; and therefore physically and psychologically separate from the villages to which they are attached. Such developments are not part of an integrated village scene. The general character of Shipley is therefore of low density housing, with houses built one at a time to different designs but with common building principles and materials. There is both similarity and diversity of design.

There was some building in stone for the more prestigious houses, but though it was commonly used in nearby parishes such as Amberley, it is remarkably rare in Shipley. Knapped flints, which were common further south near the Downs were also hardly used at all. There is no history of thatch being used, except on one house in Dragons Green and the scout hut, which was originally a chapel



Shipley Old Vicarage

and slate tiled. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century houses were roofed with concrete pantiles. This allowed flatter roofs to be built, but was mainly an economy rather than a positive design feature. All these materials are not part of the distinctive character of the parish.

The old part of Shipley village is designated a Conservation Area.

### Design features

The earliest half-timbered buildings had unadorned and unpatterned roofs of stone or clay tiles. These mainly had hipped or half-hipped ends.

The wood of the timbering in the walls was painted black with tar, or left unpainted. There was doubtless some use of ochre paint, though no external remains are to be seen. The infill was painted white or off-white with lime wash. Where the external walls were covered with tiles, these more often carried patterns created from tiles of different shapes. Where the walls were covered externally with wooden boarding, this was largely narrow,



Old parish poor house

feathered boards, and might be painted black with tar or creosote, or white with lime wash, or left unpainted.

The earliest windows were mullioned and unglazed, though these only remain as internal features, where they have been built over. When glass became available, the main style was in diamond-patterned lead glazing. In more recent years this has been superseded by larger rectangular panes of glass with wooden spars, though the very large panes frequently seen in industrial areas were never really used here except in the large doors of barn conversions.

Doors were braced plank construction.

## Recent building

There has been very little recent building because of the recognised rural nature of the parish. A few houses have been allowed as infill in the hamlets, a few as agricultural dwellings and a number as replacements for older wooden dwellings.

A number of redundant farm buildings and a chapel have been converted to dwelling houses. Some council houses were also built in the 1950s. Some ancient Sussex barns have been converted to houses or business premises. Some more-recent farm buildings have also been converted to business premises though all have largely retained their essential external design.

There are two intensive "housing estate" developments in Shipley Village: Church Close built in the 1940s & 50s, and King's Plat built in the 1970s. Both are small and fit in well. A low-cost apartment block has recently been built at Coolham crossroads.

In the 1960s some houses were allowed which were quite out of keeping with the local building style. More-recently built houses have been closer to the local vernacular style and materials, though with some glaring exceptions.

A significant number of houses have been extended and recently HDC has insisted on a style more in keeping with the original building, though usually recognisable as extensions. A number of conservatories have been added, usually in the national Victorian or Edwardian style.

In a recent development of six semi-detached houses in Coolham, the architects have introduced a commendable degree of variation in the designs,



but they are cut off from the village by a high front hedge as are many of the houses in Coolham, with a dedicated service road along the frontage.

In the mobile home park in Brooks Green, which was developed after the last war on a field which had trackways hardened by the military before D-Day, the previous large touring caravan style of dwelling has been replaced with the nationally standard multi-part wooden villa house. These are almost entirely of one design and therefore match each other closely. This design and conformity, of course, has no connection at all to the local vernacular style and lay-out.

## Farm and commercial buildings, garage and sheds

Farm buildings were constructed from similar materials to houses. Barns were often large buildings with full height doors in both long sides to allow horses pulling loaded wagons to pass through and to allow a draught for winnowing grain. Wagon sheds were of lower height, and cattle byres were low, open fronted structures. They were generally part of the farmyard, but were

sometimes placed away in the fields to allow local storage for animal feeding. As they were built from wood, the roofs were held up on beams. With the absence of local wall-building stone, there were no arches.

Many early motor cars, which had to be kept under cover, were kept in carriage or wagon sheds or had purpose-built brick and tile constructions. With the coming of cheap motoring, there was a need for cheaper garages. Frequently these were redundant lower quality intensive-farming or nursery buildings or simple flat roofed structures. More recently, traditional building design has been required for these.

There are a significant number of 20<sup>th</sup> century steel or concrete framed farm buildings which are redundant. These are largely empty or used to store old equipment. Most of these are quite alien to the traditional nature of local rural buildings, but where they have good road access some have been converted for light industrial purposes.

## Walls, hedges, verges, entrances/gateways/ driveways

Early boundaries were hedges which consisted of thorn bushes,

which grow well in the locality. If kept low and well trimmed, they grow dense and are resistant to animals. Boundaries round houses and fields were identical. Walls as boundaries were very rare, but when bricks became available they were used around houses and gardens. Virtually no stone was used. Fences were made of local timber and were constructed from round or split oak posts and rails.

Driveways were largely just mud, but in the better class of premises were hardened with chalk from the South Downs. This settles well into clay but when wet can become slippery. There was no local source of roadstone aggregate or gravel, so they could not be used until transport improved. Horsham stone flags were used indoors, but very little outdoors because of the cost. There was little use of cobbles or beach stones.

Verges are a relatively recent phenomenon, and only arrived when the mud roads and drives were hardened at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Before that, they were just part of the roadway. Until the widespread arrival of

mechanical mowers in the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, they were cut by hand with scythes or grazed by tethered animals, or just left to grow out. They are now a wonderful home for wild flowers and small creatures.

## Roads

Most of the roads in the parish, being old drove roads, run from the South Downs north into the forest, and are reasonably straight, though there are some which meander about from farm to farm following hedge lines. There is an old turnpike road which runs from Horsham to Steyning and was doubtless originally a drove.

The roads in the parish were very difficult to traverse in the past, as the clay rapidly became impassable in heavy rain. As a consequence, vehicles took a wider and wider path to avoid the mud. Thus the roadways became very wide. When the roads were metalled in the early twentieth century with chalk from the South Downs, a narrow track was laid in the roadway. As a consequence, many verges are very wide, but this is variable depending on the

local details of the soil.

The Burrell family sponsored the construction of an east-west road in the 18<sup>th</sup> century reputedly with the help of French prisoners of the Napoleonic wars, which connected their estates in Shipley with those in Cuckfield. The section in the parish has straight stretches and very narrow verges, which makes it unsafe to walk along. It has become part of the A272 which is a major east-west trunk road for the South East of England, and bisects the parish.

All the roads are single carriageway and narrow, except for the north-south road which has become the A24 and skirts the parish on the east side.

As many of the lanes are only just above single track width, and the verges are wide, a lot of vehicular passing is done with the nearside wheels on the verge. The verges are therefore muddy, rutted and lacking in grass cover especially in winter.

Traffic along the A272 is seldom onerous because of the disruptions to east-west traffic on it caused by the many villages along its way.



*Road with wide verges*



*Green tunnel*

Traffic along the minor roads is not onerous except for some rat-running from the south up to Horsham through Coolham and Brooks Green. In recent years the condition of these roads has deteriorated significantly.

Because of the soft nature of the ground, some of the roads have become sunken, and because of the ubiquity of old oak trees, many give the appearance of green tunnels.

The A272 has national major-road markings and signage. Recently dangerous intersections have been covered with bright red tarmac. It is hoped that this really does prevent accidents as it is both significantly unsightly and expensive. The lanes have no markings except at junctions or dangerous corners. Direction signs are finger posts in raised black lettering on a white wooden board, carried on handsome round posts carrying at the top a cast iron roundel with the name of the village or hamlet.

### Green lanes, bridleways and footpaths

There are a few green lanes which were not hardened in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, and a

large number of bridleways and footpaths which mostly run from farm to farm. Most are kept in good useable condition by the WSCC and landowners, and signposting is generally good. A number, especially in Brooks Green are obstructed. One ancient bridleway, Crookhorn Lane, was most likely an old drove, but local tradition has it that it was part of a Saxon route from London to the south coast. Travellers went up the Thames and the Wey, leaving the river near Cranleigh. They went overland to re-embark on the Adur at Shipley, which was navigable down to Steyning, a major seaport in those times. It was possibly the importance of Shipley as a staging post on the way to the continent for crusaders which led to the church being given to the Templars.

### Services

Along with much of the country, electrical and telephone services are supplied mainly in the form of wires slung from tarred conifer poles. In more recent years, with the development of good insulating materials, the trees have been allowed to grow round them, which camouflages



*Finger post*



*Crookhorn Lane*

them well. This leads to power outages in stormy weather, but this is a price worth paying as cables are unnatural and visually intrusive. However, there has been a proliferation of overhead telephone wires to individual houses which looks disappointingly untidy.

There are some local higher voltage wires slung from metal brackets on timber poles, but the parish is disfigured by a very-high-voltage line, carried on very large steel pylons which crosses the parish on an east-west line near the northern end.



All the properties have piped water supplied, but there is no provision of piped gas. Individual houses almost all have oil or LPG tanks to supply heating systems. Sewerage mains are only available in Shipley village, Coolham and Dragons Green.

Domestic television aerials are largely being replaced by the more discrete satellite dishes. There are a number of telephone masts, but these are generally well hidden amongst tall trees.

Thankfully, there is very little overhead lighting of public spaces, though the parish suffers severely from light pollution generated by poorly designed lighting in nearby parishes.

There are a few treatment plants or pumping station buildings. These are generally constructed in the national utilitarian style and quite unrelated to local design, but are not prominent.

## Rivers, lakes and ponds

The Adur, the only river in

the parish, has tributary brooks running from west to east across the parish. From about St Cuthman's pond it becomes large enough to be called a river, but it meanders along narrow floodplains until it reaches the Knepp estate, where it was historically channelled to prevent flooding of water meadows.

A very striking feature is Knepp lake. This was created by damming up the valley above the original Knepp Castle to supply water for an ironmaking hammer mill. There are a few other smaller dams and lakes.

As there are a large number of minor springs in the clay of the parish, there are a very large number of farm ponds, almost every field being serviced by one. Indeed it is arguable that the original positioning of field boundaries and farmyards was to make use of these springs for the watering of animals. These ponds are mostly small, stagnant and overhung by trees, and thus poor in oxygen. The only fish and other inhabitants are those which can cope with these conditions. Interestingly, some ponds have slipways so that farm carts could be driven into them in the summer to keep the wooden wheels damp, so that they would not dry out, shrink and thus become loose.

Most of the older houses were served by wells which still exist,

which were dug through the clay down into the aquiferous shale beds of Horsham stone. There is a spring serving a very shallow well, Abraham's Well on the east side of Bakers Lane.

## Flora

The majority of the parish is made up of small fields. Many of these are covered in natural meadow with many grasses and a wide variety of other meadow plants such as buttercups, daisies, milkmaids and clover.



The many hedges have a wide variety of low-growing trees. Most evident are the blackthorn or hawthorns, but there are also elder, field maple and hornbeam. The banks provide a habitat for an enormous range of plants. There are the flowers such as primroses, cowslips, violets and dandelions and the climbing plants such as honeysuckle, dog roses, and the ubiquitous bramble.





Bluebell woods

In the north-east of the parish, on areas of poor sandy soil, there is an area of woodland. This was traditional woodland which was widely felled during the second world war to allow troops and materiel to concentrate prior to D-Day. Marpost Wood, Madgelands Wood and Blinks Wood are designated Ancient Woodland. The remainder was planted with conifers after the war by The Forestry Commission. These were ravaged by the storm of 1987, and subsequently felled about 20 years ago, and local hardwoods allowed to grow on. These are largely oaks and hazels, but with ashes, sweet chestnuts, silver birches and many others. These woodlands have open rides with grass and bramble areas much favoured by wildlife such as butterflies. There is some damage to hedges and the woodland under-storey due to excess browsing by deer.

In recent years, blackthorn hedges have been allowed to grow out, so that in early spring the hedges all seem to be dusted with

a magical light coating of snow.

In these and other areas of woodland are to be found wild garlic, anemones and orchids

Most spectacularly, the woodlands and hedgerows of the parish, where they have never been ploughed, are host to a vast number of bluebells. In spring they cover the whole ground with a dense carpet of blue. In the woodland in the north-east of the parish there is also an area of wild daffodils.

Knepp Castle Park is designated a Historic Park.

### Wild fauna

Knepp Lake, St Cuthman's gardens and pond, woodland south of Brick Kiln Farm, locally known as Horsham Common and woodland south of Perryland Farm are designated as Sites of Conservation Importance.

The wildlife of the parish of Shipley has changed in recent years due to the change in agriculture from arable to pasture land. We now have birds of

prey such as buzzards, kestrels, sparrow hawks, red kites and the summer visitor the hobby. Along with many other areas we have the loss of lapwings and skylarks.

Hérons, mallards, moorhens and cormorants are often seen on the river Adur.

Over 50 different species of birds have been observed throughout the year in the parish.



Roe deer

The wild flora and fauna have benefited from the recent change of farm payment system, which has led to the creation of buffer strips left uncultivated around arable fields.

In recent years there has been an increase in the population of roe deer.



Blackthorn hedge



Wild daffodils

## 3. Development/change:

# Overall Philosophy and Sustainability



We recognise that times change and design must move on and particularly in the matter of sustainability, but this must be done in a way that retains those aspects of design which the inhabitants value. We therefore welcome innovation in the internal feature of buildings, which the owners see, but exteriors which the public sees should remain harmonious with the distinctive nature of existing buildings. Some contemporary architecture can distract from the rural character of the parish, and generally a traditional design is welcomed. However, high quality design which is also harmonious with the local character and innovative is not to be discouraged.

As a general attitude, where a new or changed building or feature is considered, the aim should be that the scene looks better with the change than without it. This means that it is not enough to look at the building or feature in isolation, it must be looked at in context, both from close-by where neighbours would see it, but also from a distance, how the wider public would see it. This is a demanding test, but by no means impossible. There are many buildings and villages in England which meet these criteria.

Parishioners at the public meetings stated that they were not happy with the recent trend towards suburban features in the parish. These include high panel fences, leylandii hedges, obtrusive outdoor lighting, closely mown verges, concrete brick aprons, concrete kerb stones and open front lawns. They were also not happy with over-indulgent features such as wrought iron gates, flanking walls for gateways, strongly coloured garage doors and tile hanging on fine old brick walls.

### Security

Burglar alarms, if fitted, should not spoil the integrity of the building. Burglars can see alarm boxes, even if not prominent and garishly painted. Tall front walls or fences, often seen as an aid to prevention of burglary, are in fact the opposite. West Sussex police crime prevention officers recommend low front boundaries so that the house frontage is visible to passers-by. Native hedge such as black or hawthorn can be as impenetrable as any solid fence or wall, especially if it conceals post and barbed wire fencing.

### Sustainability

The main thrust of thinking about sustainability is to minimise

the use of irreplaceable resources, in particular fossil fuels. In so far as this concerns transport, it is not a matter for this report except that all new housing should be placed so as to minimise the need for private transport.

### Sustainable Design

In terms of design, homes should be designed to minimise heat loss, and the construction materials should have the lowest energy footprint and as long a life as possible. Modern materials and systems are available which meet these requirements, at the same time as being suitable to blend with local designs. No details are included here as they will change frequently. Up-to-date lists are available from HDC.

Sustainable construction should also seek to incorporate water efficiency, for example through the inclusion of water butts for rainwater recycling, the use of permeable surfaces for drives and car parking, and consider the use of soakaways.

Renewable energy sources should be designed to minimise adverse visual impact. Wood or biomass burning systems fit in well with traditional building designs. Ground heat pump systems are virtually invisible outside. Solar

## 4. Characteristic Design Features



*Dragons Green house*

energy systems which require roof mounting should be installed on roofs not facing public access areas, or show as little contrast with the roofing material and line as possible. Wind turbines should be installed in as inconspicuous positions as possible.

Boundaries should be constructed from living plants.

Section 2 explored the history of design in the parish, and thereby showed what features we have now. As our aim is for new features to be harmonious with the past and maintain the character of the parish, reading that section plus walking around the parish should give anyone contemplating change a good idea of what we prefer. This section condenses and clarifies these ideas to be an easy reference section for owners and their professional advisers and builders.

### Planning permission

To protect the rural nature of the parish and the wishes of the parishioners, the Shingley Parish

Council has recently adopted some guidelines for dealing with planning applications. Any proposed development should:

- Be in keeping with the rural nature of the Parish and not be sporadic development of a greenfield site.
- Be capable of being absorbed into the locality without adversely affecting the character of the parish.
- Not result in the over-development of a site or create a precedent for ribbon development.
- Be compatible with the surroundings and not be a source of pollution.
- Not adversely affect the well-being of neighbouring residents, but enhance the way of life and needs of the Parish.
- Not put undue pressure on the infrastructure.
- Protect the Conservation Area.
- Develop only worthwhile and long-standing agricultural buildings.

### Houses and their extensions

#### Styles and features

The HDC Local Development Framework Policies need to be the initial guide in terms of bulk and scale deemed to be allowable for houses and their extensions. For extensions, relevance is placed upon the gross floor area, i.e. without later extensions, and this in turn predicts the scale of the addition and alterations proposed. Each case is determined on its individual merits, particularly with regard to plot size, residential curtilage and impact upon adjacent premises.

The overall form of a new build or extension needs to harmonise with the local Sussex style, but an extension needs in addition to complement the style of the existing building.

Specific features to be considered include:

### Simple rectilinear massing

Most properties within the parish are predominantly of very simple shapes, often rectangular with the eaves line running parallel to the road frontage. Often the roof lines are simple with simple roof abutments and extensions where added.

Where the form of the existing building is architecturally balanced, and the bonding on of an extension would disrupt that balance, a separate stand-alone subservient structure using a simple single storey connecting short link could be considered. This might be particularly relevant where the shapes and sizes and relative positioning are those of a typical farmhouse with outbuildings. The two ridge lines need not be parallel.

### Overall shape

Typical two-storey buildings are common in the parish. Such a building may, in addition, have useable attics, but three-storey buildings are uncharacteristic. There are a few semi-detached houses and a couple of multi-occupation buildings; but no terraces. Typical single-storey buildings are not common, but where they have a long ridge line, they complement well the traditional single-storey farm buildings. Square 'seaside' bungalows are not common or characteristic. A few 'chalet bungalows', where the upper storey is carried entirely above the line of the eaves, have been built recently, but they are alien to the local design tradition. However, there are a considerable number of handsome one-and-a-half storey houses where the eaves line is part-way up the upper storey, with windows carried in wall dormers or gable ends.

### Roof Pitch

Most properties in the parish have been constructed with steep roofs between 40° and 45° with pitches to abutments, hips and dormers at the same angle. Roof pitches on both sides of the ridge are the same.

### Partial/Barn Hips

The typical half-hip on many barn buildings within Sussex is found on many houses in the parish. It consists of a small hipped end to a gable of 1/3 or 2/3 of the gable end triangular height, thus softening the massing of the building in question. The upper point of the gable is replaced by a small hip squaring off the top of the gable and the lower edge of the partial hip usually has a gutter which leads back to the remainder of the roof on one or both sides.

### Cat-slide roofs

Outshots or lean-tos with cat-slide roofs, where the roof line comes down from the second to first storey level, and do not necessarily extend to the full length of the building, are common on the older buildings. The pitch of the cat-slide roof should be exactly the same as the roof which is being extended.

### Dormers

Roof dormers, though not original on early buildings, are fairly common. Where present they are typically narrow, with hipped roofs. Wide dormers or dormers with shallow sloped or flat roofs are not characteristic.

There are also a number of houses with wall dormers. These tend to occur in the one-and-a-half storey buildings. In these dormers, the face is integral with the face of the wall below, breaking the line of the eaves



*Partial hips*



*Dormers*



*Dormers*



*Gablets*



*Windows*



*Weatherboarding*

of the building. It is essentially a continuation of the wall above the eaves. They are thus more of a vertically projecting wall element than an elaboration of the roof.

### Gablets

Many of the oldest houses have gablets. These are small open gables above the hipped line of the roof. They were originally provided to allow smoke to escape from the open halls before chimneys were installed. They can be glazed to allow small amounts of light into roof spaces.

### Windows

The earliest houses had unglazed mullioned windows closed with sliding wooden shutters, but this is no longer tolerable. There are some elaborately mullioned windows carried outside the face of the building, with small square glass panes, but the most common development was to replace the entire window with diamond paned leaded lights. This is common in the parish. Most typical though, are the white painted timber Georgian Bar style windows, also known as cottage windows. All windows are fixed or hinged, there are only a very few sash windows.

It is acknowledged that with the desire for reduced maintenance, longer life and double-glazed windows, new materials such as PVC can achieve good results in modern buildings with

a sympathetic appearance. It is harder to achieve this with diamond leaded lights. There are a few bow windows, but they are not characteristic. External shutters are very rare.

### Roof detailing

Often seen on some of the older buildings within the parish is the omission of fascias altogether, with guttering fixed via rafter brackets to the ends of exposed timber rafters.

### Brick chimneys, often with corbelling

Many dwellings within the parish have been constructed using clay bricks from local brickworks, and consequently often quite large and elaborately detailed chimneys. Due to the rural location and non-availability of fuels such as gas, this is a dominant feature within the parish, and should be included wherever possible to maintain the same characteristics.

### Doors

Front doors are almost universally rectangular and of braced plank construction and are typically placed in the centre of the road-facing façade.

### Porches

Many of the houses have porches over the front doors. These may be small porticos



*Roof detailing*



*Brick chimneys*



*Porches*



*Curves and arches*

suspended from the front wall, or be carried on upright posts. In that case, the roof is tiled to match the main roof and of the same pitch. The porch is normally of modest size and open fronted and sided, and only very rarely an enclosed front-hall with an outside door.

## Uncharacteristic Styles and Features in Shipleigh Parish

### Curves and arches

Curved features such as arched windows, eyebrow type roof windows and archways are very rare in the parish and are deemed not to be characteristic. Occasionally swept brick arches over rectangular windows have been used, sometimes using the same contrasting red brick as used for the quoins.

### Picture Windows

It is clearly evident within the parish that the use of picture windows with large broad expanses of glass detract from the character of the parish, and should be avoided unless part of a Sussex Barn conversion.

### Low Pitched roofs

Any roof with a pitch of less than 40° should be avoided.

### Other styles

Within Shipleigh parish, Mock Tudor or 'stockbroker belt' styles are not characteristic, nor are the 'Arts and Crafts' styles.

## Materials and Colours

### Traditional brickwork with contrasting brick quoins

This is a strong detail in much

of the parish, utilising subtle contrasts such as this building along Bakers Lane.

On a number of older buildings the brickwork has been painted, often to give homogeneity of presentation on mixed materials, and is normally painted off-white. Bright white and colours, even pastel shades, are uncharacteristic.

### Red/dark brickwork, often with blue headers in Flemish Garden Wall bond

There are a large number of properties scattered about the parish that incorporate this detailing. Historically utilising an old brick making technique whereby the red bricks were re-presented into the furnace giving a blue/purple glaze. Sourcing these 'special' bricks can prove difficult and as a result a successful sympathetic alternative has been to use Staffordshire Blue bricks instead.

### Weatherboarding

Often used in conjunction with natural or painted brickwork or tile hanging, timber weatherboarding has been used in a number of locations around the parish on both old and newer properties. This is almost always applied to only the upper floor. The boards may be painted white, if a traditional dwelling house, or black or be treated with preservative and left unpainted to develop the attractive silver-grey of weathered timber. The boards should be narrow and parallel-sided and have the 'feathered' profile.

### Tile hanging

Extensively used across the parish, generally in conjunction with natural brick to the lower half. Sometimes with contrasting colour



Flemish Bond brickwork



Contrasting tiles



Contrasting quoins



Decorative tiles

bands within the tile hanging, but in most cases single colour tiles incorporating decorative feature club tiles. Again, this occurs on only the upper floor.

However, this attractive feature can be over-used, especially if used to cover good brickwork.

### Render

There are properties within



Pondtail Farm Offices

the parish that have utilised render. It can be said that this is harmonious with the earlier wattle and daub found on half-timbered buildings, so long as the surface finish is flat and relatively rough. A lime render finish can blend in well.

### **Black circular guttering and downpipes**

Although often seen as insignificant in terms of the overall aesthetic of development, the colour and style of guttering can significantly change the appearance of a property. Black half-round guttering and round downpipes are found on the vast majority of buildings in the parish.

### **Roofing materials**

The earliest houses had Horsham Stone tiles, but this material is too expensive and heavy to have been used in new builds in recent years, but should be maintained on historic buildings where existing. Plain clay tiles are the most characteristic roofing material, and are generally accompanied by either white or black bargeboards and fascias. The tiles are characteristically uneven, without the flatness of

'machine-made' tiles. Decorative shaped tiles are common on walls, but uncharacteristic on roofs. Ridge tiles are plain half-round with no decoration. The colour of most roofs is a mixture of red and brown tiles giving an attractive 'rural' look.

As outlined in section 2, the use of Welsh slates following the development of the railway infrastructure became evident. Although not a local material, there is significant use of such slates on properties in the parish.

In any extension, the materials of the original building should be matched as closely as possible, but where original roofing material has been uncharacteristic, the whole roof may be replaced with more-suitable material.

### **Uncharacteristic Materials**

#### **Stonework**

Other than the occasional stone cills found on older brick clad properties, and low stone dwarf walls in the foundations of barns, the use of stone is not characteristic in the parish and is very rarely found.



Exterior lighting well set

#### **Flintwork**

Similarly to stone, flint, either napped or whole is found in nearby parishes but very rarely in Shipleigh.

#### **Large format tiles**

The use of large format and interlocking roof tile systems, or concrete tiles of any type are not characteristic.

#### **Wooden shingles**

These are quite out of character with the buildings of the parish.

#### **Plastic cladding and UPVC**

These are not characteristic within the parish.

### **Garages and sheds**

These buildings should match the houses that they are associated with and should use the same design criteria as



*Brown's Barn*

houses. They are likely to be constructed from less expensive materials, but can still give the same external appearance. Typically they may have timber frames or breeze block walls with timber weatherboarding down to ground level. Rendered block walls can look good, but painted unrendered blocks should be avoided. Such buildings can be constructed to emulate cart sheds or open-fronted cow byres. The massing and relative positioning of these buildings should be in harmonious proportion with the houses and surrounding buildings that they are associated with.

In particular, large garage doors should be painted only in muted countryside colours.

### Farm Buildings

As the Parish has been predominantly dominated by agriculture in the past and retains a degree of farming now, it understandably has numerous farms and their associated buildings both in current use and non-use.

There are very few farm buildings being constructed

nowadays apart from timber clad horse stables in a national style. These generally look well locally, apart from the low-pitched roofs which are uncharacteristic and unharmonious.

A number of good old farm buildings have been and are being converted to houses. This is sad, but may be the only way to preserve the marvellous old barns which are found in the parish. The agricultural use should be preserved first to maintain the character of the area which is rural. In these cases, it is critical to maintain the original outside appearance of the building.

There are also a number of wide span concrete or steel frame farm buildings with corrugated sheet coverings and low-pitched roofs. These are not generally harmonious in the countryside, and very few have been built recently. There are a number of these buildings which are still in use for agriculture, and a number which have become redundant.

Where agricultural buildings are closed up for an alternative use, nesting boxes for owls should be provided.

### Commercial Buildings

There has been very little construction of new commercial buildings in the parish. However, a number of older traditional buildings have been converted to office use. In these cases it is again essential to maintain the original outside appearance of the buildings.

Some redundant concrete or steel framed farm buildings with good road access have been reclad and used as light industrial units. These do not look harmonious, but are at least better than redundant buildings which are allowed to fall into disrepair. The cladding should be in muted countryside colours, and hedging and tree planting should be used to help soften and hide them.

### Exterior Lighting

As mentioned in section 2, an aspect of the countryside which is much valued is darkness at night. External lights, including street lights must therefore be set so that they light the ground and no light spills out above the horizontal. The light source should not be visible at night if looked at from the side. This is best

done by using only the nationally recommended screened flat glass light fittings, installed with the glass horizontal. They should also be on time switches. Bowls or 'old fashioned' lanterns are not appropriate in the countryside. In particular, 'fairy lights' along driveways are suburban looking and unsuitable.

### Road Signs

The number, size and visibility of road signs are increasing. These should be kept to the minimum necessary for safety and direction. Information should not be repeated and unnecessary signs should be removed.

The traditional black and white fingerposts are the most attractive way to sign rural junctions.

### Services

Cables hung from poles are obtrusive in countryside areas, and wires should be safely buried wherever possible, even if this is a more expensive option in the short-term. Optic fibre cables, with their associated paraphernalia, are particularly ugly.

Wheelie bins are very practical and need to be placed near the road to allow economical collection, but they are a significantly urbanising feature. It is a matter of putting them out as late as possible, bringing them in as soon as possible and especially not leaving them permanently at the roadside, but providing a convenient storage place so that they are not visible to the public.

### The street scene. Hedges, fences, walls, verges, roads, footpaths, driveways

This group covers the roadsides, frontages and

boundaries as they are related to residences and commercial properties. They are almost as important as the design of buildings in determining the visual appearance of the parish.

It was generally agreed that the road scene should look different depending on its situation. Thus there should be different looks to suburbs, villages, hamlets and open country. As Shibley has no suburbs at present, this category is not needed at present except to point out where this type of road scene is being inappropriately created in the more rural situations. In particular, suburbs tend to be neat and tidy.

In Shibley parish our two villages, Shibley and Coolham are both close concentrations of buildings, and are quite small. There are about 30 houses in each.

Our two hamlets, Dragons Green and Brooks Green are looser collections of properties, with wider frontages and often set back from the road. They both comprise older houses with some pre- and post-war strip development on the roads. Dragons Green also has about 30 houses, but Brooks Green has about 60 homes.

The parish has never had any concentrated development, except for the two small estates in Shibley village, so the character is reasonably homogeneous. So it is not necessary to treat the villages and hamlets individually. The exception to this is the mobile home park in Brooks Green which has a concentrated estate of homes, all of the recent national villa style.

### Villages

It is the nature of villages that the houses are grouped tightly



Over use of signage



Village verge



Mobile home park frontages



Village hedge



Village driveway

together but the scene is kept open by the houses all being visible to each other. Shipley and Coolham both fit this pattern. So the front boundaries are generally low. Tall front walls, fences or hedges are unsuitable, even where the property is set back from the road, as they tend to compartmentalise the scene and close it in. Exceptionally they are tall as an aid to noise reduction on the A272. Where the building is close to the road, a front boundary may not be appropriate, but where it is set back there is normally a low front boundary wall, fence or hedge, not higher than say 60cms.

Walls are generally brick, not stone or stone/brick mix. They have flat tops along their length, not being scalloped or castellated, with buttresses not protruding above the top edge.

Hedges may be dense imported species or rougher native species, but kept well trimmed. The open lawn frontage from the house to the road that is popular in much of recent English suburbia and small-town America is not suitable in an English village, and only very rarely present in the parish.

The road frontage in the villages tends to have pavement, but where this is not so, or where the pavement is only part of the verge, then grass areas cut to lawn length look well. Many front gardens have flowers or lawn, but as these are rural villages, any access for cars allows only a driveway in the frontage. The whole front garden is not paved. This surface should be traditional and permeable to rain, to minimise run-off. Gravel and aggregate look fine or uncemented traditional brick if restricted to the wheel tracks. Plastic mesh sunk into grass also

works well. Tarmac, concrete, concrete bricks laid in an apron or slate or marble chips are not characteristic. Front gates are low, open and made of wood.

Rear garden boundaries can be tall and dense to give privacy, and they do not affect the street scene, so long as neighbours are not adversely affected. Where a side garden has a road frontage, a low boundary is preferred, but requirements for privacy must be taken into consideration.

### Hamlets

The hamlets are a more difficult proposition. They are a cross between village and countryside. The houses are not spaced uniformly, so that uniform treatment is more difficult. The presumption should be the same as in the villages. Properties should be open to the road, but with front boundaries. Tall hedges are not preferred, as again they tend to close up the scene and destroy the feeling of a group of houses. In particular, as the hamlets are basically rural, tall walls or dense hedges such as leylandii and panel fences are inappropriate.

This can occur particularly where the road frontage of the property includes a longish garden or orchard to the side of the house. Some residents like privacy in these areas and prefer to have higher boundaries. As in country areas, all hedges look best when they are of native varieties, but trimmed regularly by hand or with flail cutters. Again, American style open front lawns are not characteristic. Gates are as in villages. Gateposts should be modest and flanking walls avoided as not matching the understated nature of the Parish unless they are also serving as retaining walls.



*Hamlet gateway*



*Farm gateway*



*Farm drive with aggregate*



*Knepp Estate parkland*



*Buffer strip*



Woodland in winter

The roadsides are not paved, and the verges are areas of grass. In general these look more in keeping with the rural scene if they are long-cut with as much opportunity as possible for wild flowers to grow. Driveway surfacing is as in villages.

Inside the mobile home park, the village style is appropriate except that with the small scale, completely open frontages are also appropriate. The estate, and its associated touring caravan park is, however, so completely different from the general traditional style of the parish that views of it from outside should be minimised by tall and thick native plantings; which is largely the case at present.

### Open Country

In open country, the field and woodland frontages are native hedges, either regularly cut to

farming height, or allowed to grow out permanently. Verges are long-cut seasonally by the council.

Where individual properties have driveways or frontages onto these roads, they should look like farm houses or cottages. High or low trimmed or untrimmed hedges or low walls are appropriate immediately surrounding the road access or in front of the house. High walls or panel fences are inappropriate. Cultivated hedges or mown lawns should not extend for any length along the road.

Driveways should be gravel or aggregate. Concrete kerbstones either in driveways or on roads are inappropriate and should only be installed for safety reasons and where no other solution is possible. Farm or commercial roadways, where hardened, have traditionally been aggregate, gravel or chalk, but concrete is more solid and is widely used.

### The rural scene. Fields, trees, views, rivers, ditches, open spaces

Parishioners state that they want to see traditional management of the countryside demonstrated. There is no support for bare or weed-infested areas and limited support for large areas of tightly-mown grass, which is not rural. Agriculturally productive fields are considered to be best.

In the south east of the parish, a large estate is implementing a policy of allowing the land to become wild and grazed by free ranging animals such as cattle, ponies, pigs and deer. It is hoped that eventually, if the choice of animals and stocking rate is correctly managed, the fields will revert to an attractive woodland and clearing setting. In the meanwhile Injurious Weeds such as thistles, docks and ragwort



Adur water meadows

together with brambles, gorse and willows have proliferated. See Knepp Castle Estate website ([www.knepp.co.uk](http://www.knepp.co.uk)) for further information.

Management of the woodlands, with a vigorous understorey is appreciated. Poorer trees are being cleared to allow larger trees to develop. They are therefore now becoming very attractive. There are a few plantations of conifers remaining.

Traditional hedges of blackthorn, hawthorn, field maple and wild rose are appreciated.

Agricultural fencing such as post and barbed wire or rail fences or low sheep fencing blends in well, but high deer fencing should be minimised unless it is installed along a tall hedgerow. In open fields electric fencing looks alien. It should be coloured to blend with the natural scene, not be used as a permanent feature, and removed

as soon as it is no longer in use.

The River Adur has shown dramatic change since the 1970s. Then there was open water. At that time sluice boards were maintained at points along the river to ensure water levels were good in the summer. The river was also cleaned on a regular basis by dredging, and the banks kept clear. Those activities have now ceased and the river is overgrown with a variety of water and waterside plants. Canoeing, which was once possible is now no longer so.

Ditches beside the roads in general show that no regular cleaning takes place and water beside the road often cannot get into the ditch area.

Damage by vehicles to the road verges is recognised as a significant problem but it is difficult to see a solution. Making passing places was suggested, but many feel that this would not work in practice. The provision of pull-in

areas in roads facilitates fly-tipping.

There has recently been large-scale dumping of sub-soil and other inert materials both in Shipley and neighbouring parishes to build bunds and hills. Where this despoils good land it degrades the character of the parish and should be resisted. Where fertile soil is moved to a new site, the shape should match the flatness or gently undulating nature of the surrounding countryside, and no good views should be obscured. It should be planted with native grasses and trees.

Access to the countryside by footpath is easy and much appreciated. It is suggested that on some public footpaths there should be benches to rest and view the countryside. Obstructed public footpaths should be re-opened.



Cart pond

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## 5. Map of Shipley

